

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4-6, 8, 9, 13, and 15-20 are presently active in this case. Claims 1, 4-6, 9, 13, and 15-20 have been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding office action, the title of the invention was objected to; the specification was objected to for containing minor errors; claims 1, 5, 9, 13 were objected to; claims 1, 4, 6, 8, 13, and 15-20 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, for being indefinite; claims 9 and 16 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent number 5,890,192 to Lee et al.; and claim 19 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee et al. in view of US Patent number 5,603,001 to Sukagawa et al.

Claim 5 was indicated as being allowable over the prior order of record. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter. Claims 1, 4, 8, 13, 15, 17, 18, and 20 were also indicated as being allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Applicants again acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter. In response to the rejection of those claims under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, applicants have amended said claims as recommended in the office action. Consequently, no further rejection on this basis is therefore anticipated.

In response to the objection of the title, the title has been rewritten as recommended by the office action. No further objection on this basis is therefore anticipated.

In response to the objection to the specification, the specification has been rewritten as recommended in the office action. Hence, no further objection on this basis is therefore anticipated.

Regarding the objections to claims 1, 5, and 13, those claims have been amended as recommended in the office action. No further objection on this basis is therefore anticipated.

Claim 9 is directed to an electrically rewritable nonvolatile semiconductor memory device. Claim 9 provides that writing operations to write different data in different addresses in a plurality of memory circuits are simultaneously carried out and a pass/fail result of each of the writing operations is output to each of the memory circuits and is accumulated in the corresponding at least one data buffer stage. Hence, it is the object of claim 9 to judge if the writing operations as a whole pass or fail when a series of writing operations of a memory circuit, such as cache operations, are completed. By employing such a configuration, high speed performance processing can be obtained. See the specification at page 10, lines 26-34. It is clear from that description that the pass/fail results accumulated are for different data and for different addresses.

The Official Action asserts that claims 9 and 16 are anticipated by Lee et al. Lee et al. disclose that data chunks stored in the data registers 404, 405, 409 and 410 are simultaneously written in the sub-arrays 400-0 – 400-3 and that the verification circuits 403, 403, 407 and 408 repeat data writing and verification until all bits are normally programmed.

Applicants point out that, however, in Lee et al. a plurality of data writings are performed for the same address and the same data, and the judgments being made regarding pass/fail are performed for the same address.

In contrast, as discussed above, it is the object of claim 9 to judge if the operations as a whole pass/fail when a series of writing operations of a memory circuits, such as cache operations, are completed. Hence, claim 9 defines “writing operations to write different data and different addresses in said plurality of memory circuits are simultaneously carried out....” Consequently, claims 9 and 16 are believed to be patentably distinguishable from Lee et al.

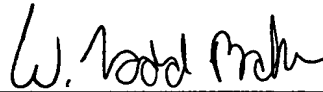
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Claim 19 depends from claim 16 and further defines that the memory cells are arranged in a NAND structure. The official action rejects claim 19 as being unpatentable over Lee et al. in view of Sukegawa et al. Claim 19 is believed to be clearly distinguishable from that asserted combination of art for the same reason that the base claims 9 and 16 are patentably distinguishable from Lee et al. The NAND structure disclosure in Sukegawa does not remedy the deficiencies of Lee et al.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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